

A Brief Guide to Scientific Literature

Phrase	Translation
It has been long known	I haven't bothered to check the references
It is known	I believe
It is believed	I think
It is generally believed	My colleagues and I think
There has been some discussion	Nobody agrees with me
It can be shown	Take my word for it
It is proven	It agrees with something mathematical
Of great theoretical importance	I find it interesting
Of great practical importance	This justifies my employment
Of great historical importance	This ought to make me famous
Some samples were chosen for study	The others didn't make sense
Typical results are shown	The best results are shown
Correct within order of magnitude	Wrong
The values were obtained empirically	The values were obtained by accident
The results are inconclusive	The results seem to disprove my hypothesis
Additional work is required	Someone else can work out the
It might be argued that	I have a good answer to this objection
The investigations proved rewarding	My grant has been renewed
Synthesised according to standard protocols	Purchased from Sigma
Thanks to Joe Blow for expert technical assistance and Jane Doe for valuable discussion	Thanks to Joe Blow for doing all the work and Jane Doe for telling me what it meant
While it has not been possible to provide definite answers to these questions	The experiments didn't work out, but I figured I could at least get a publication out of it
Accidentally strained during mounting	Dropped on the floor
Handled with extreme care throughout the experiments	Not dropped on the floor
Although some detail has been lost in reproduction, it is clear from the original micrograph	It is impossible to tell from the original micrograph
Presumably at longer times	I didn't take the time to find out
The agreement with the predicted curve is - excellent - good - satisfactory - fair - as good as could be expected	The agreement with the predicted curve is - fair - poor - doubtful - imaginary - non-existent
The most reliable values are those of Jones	Jones was a student of mine
It is clear that much additional work will be required before a complete understanding	I don't understand it.
Unfortunately, a quantitative theory to account for these effects has not been formulated	Neither does anybody else
It is hoped that this work will stimulate further work in the field	This paper isn't very good, but neither are any of the others in this miserable subject